

**TESTIMONY PRESENTED TO THE
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMITTEE ON RESOURCES
SUBCOMMITTEE ON FISHERIES AND OCEANS**



**JULY 8, 2005
KODIAK, ALASKA**

**BY
JEROME SELBY
MAYOR, KODIAK ISLAND BOROUGH**

My name is Jerome Selby and I am the Mayor of the Kodiak Island Borough. I am testifying on behalf of the Kodiak Island Borough.

Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee,

First, I want to thank you for coming to Kodiak to hold this hearing on Fisheries Management successes in Alaska and the Reauthorization of the Magnusen-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. Fisheries management is a success story in Alaska and this Act is one of the greatest economic successes in the history of Alaska. Twenty-five years ago, most of the bottom fish were harvested in Alaskan waters by foreign vessels which could be seen fishing just offshore. There was no economic benefit to Alaska from this resource. Now this resource is all caught and processed by American fishermen and represents a substantial part of Alaska's economy. Fisheries are second only to oil in the Alaska economy. About 65 percent of the human consumed fish products in the U.S. come from Alaska.

For Kodiak Island, the impact of this Act is even more significant. The seafood industry provides over 60% of Kodiak's base industry employment and nearly 70 percent of base industry payroll. When you add the U.S. Coast Guard, which is primarily here because of the fisheries, these numbers go over 80 percent. Fishing is our economic base. It provides over 1700 annual jobs. Kodiak is one of the top three ports in the U.S., processing an average of 300 million pounds of seafood worth an ex-vessel value of \$90 million a year between 1997 and 2000. Ground fish, which are managed under the Magnusen-Stevens Act, accounted for 70 percent of the volume and 44 percent of the value. It is obvious that this Act determines the economic health of Kodiak Island more than any other State of Alaska or Federal law. Our schools, businesses, and entire social structure are heavily dependent upon this reauthorization.

The North Pacific Fisheries Management Council does an outstanding job of applying the Magnusen-Stevens Act. The Council is an outstanding fisheries management success story in Alaska. The Council has managed the resource in a conservative way that has assured healthy fish stocks while providing a strong sustainable catch for the fishing industry. This has happened as a result of the use of scientific information, good input from the industry, input from the coastal communities, and good management decisions that were intentionally applied on the conservative side. If scientific information is sketchy or missing, the Council didn't "guess" and "hope for the best" but reduced the allowable catch. The one area that can improve the management of this vital resource of bottom fish in Alaskan waters is increased research that provides the needed scientific information to base the management decisions upon. These researchers need to be based in Kodiak where they can interact with the fishing industry which is a valuable source of information.

The Kodiak Island Borough has urged cooperative research efforts be conducted for many years. I personally have urged the ADF&G and the NOAA personnel to fund and conduct joint and complementary research efforts while mayor from 1983 to 1998 and now again beginning in 2004. I have witnessed and been involved in both the research and the Council process for many years and both are success stories. In order to facilitate the cooperative research effort, the Kodiak Island Borough built the Kodiak Fisheries Research Center in 1997 and leases space to the National Marine Fisheries Service research staff, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, and the University of Alaska School of Ocean Fisheries. This circulating seawater research facility has a seawater research lab shared by these agencies as well as the dry lab and necropsy areas. This facility, working in conjunction with the new research vessel, the Oscar Dyson, home ported in Kodiak provides the capacity to coordinate and conduct the

very best possible research in North Pacific fisheries and marine mammal resources. But we need more scientists and increased effort to really understand what is going on in the ocean around us. The Kodiak Island Borough is now starting the design to construct another building next to the research facility that will house Alaska Department of Fish and Game research and management staff. We feel the proximity will foster more cooperation in research and management between state and federal fisheries personnel. Kodiak Island waters are the estuary for twelve species of bottom fish, four species of salmon, three species of crab, and numerous other marine resources including marine mammals. These are some of the richest waters in the world and an ideal area to conduct research. We need to increase the research effort. This is the one change I would urge you to include in the reauthorization process.

The management processes in the North Pacific are outstanding and should be encouraged to continue. Regional councils are the strength of the management system. By having the meetings in Anchorage, all of the interest groups in Alaska can participate and be included in the process. This assures that important information is brought forward from the scientists, State of Alaska, communities, the fishing industry, and others for the council to consider. This process includes everyone and the Council meetings are a convention of all fishing interests in Alaska. No other process would be as effective and the decisions would not be as good. The regional Council process assures healthy fish stocks and support of the industry. Without the regional council, there would be little opportunity for industry and local government to participate. Decisions without local input would be unacceptable decisions. Decisions made in a vacuum are generally not good decisions. Please keep the regional council process.

The current major issues for the North Pacific Region are the rationalization of the Gulf of Alaska fishery and the need for increased research. We have confidence that the Council process currently underway will result in a good rationalization program. The Kodiak Island Borough is on record with some concerns identified in the attached resolution and we will continue to participate in the process. With regard to the research, we would urge you to make provision for increased research effort in Alaska. With increased research, the council process will only get better and see fisheries management in the North Pacific result in a healthy ecosystem that continues to feed our nation for many years to come. This also means that the Kodiak Island Borough will be a robust community with a healthy economy, a good school system, and a thriving U.S. Coast Guard base for many years to come.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Introduced by:	KIB Assembly
Requested by:	KIB Assembly
Drafted by:	Mayor Selby
Introduced:	12/02/2004
Amended:	12/02/2004
Adopted:	12/02/2004

**KODIAK ISLAND BOROUGH
RESOLUTION NO. FY 2005-09**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE KODIAK ISLAND ASSEMBLY
ENDORISING CERTAIN ELEMENTS FOR A SUCCESSFUL
GULF OF ALASKA GROUND FISH RATIONALIZATION PLAN**

WHEREAS, the fishing industry of the Gulf of Alaska groundfish fisheries has requested that the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council develop a rationalization plan for the Gulf of Alaska; and

WHEREAS, rationalization could allow fishers to meet conservation concerns, improve safety at sea, and allow the industry to become more economically efficient and more competitive in world fishery markets by extracting the most amount of value for every fish caught; and

WHEREAS, Kodiak Island is at the center of the Gulf of Alaska groundfish fisheries, with the largest share of groundfish landings, with a diverse fishing community that includes vessel owners, skippers, crew members, processor workers and processors; and

WHEREAS, the Kodiak Island Borough is dependent on groundfish through investments in shore based processing facilities, support infrastructure, and catcher vessels as well as the economic base of the value of the fish; and

WHEREAS, the seafood industry is the largest sector of the Kodiak economy, accounting for over 2,800 12-month jobs, and contributing nearly 70 percent of Kodiak's basic economy; and

WHEREAS, Kodiak Island is the largest employer of processing workers in the State of Alaska who are residents of the community and who make up a large portion of the social and cultural fabric of Kodiak; and

WHEREAS, any reduction in the volume of product coming to the Island processors will have a dramatic long term effect on the local economy as a whole and processor workers in particular; and

WHEREAS, long term stability and sustainability of Kodiak Island Coastal Communities could potentially be impacted by Gulf Rationalization; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE ASSEMBLY OF THE KODIAK ISLAND BOROUGH THAT the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council should adopt a rationalization plan that provides long term stability and sustainability to the Kodiak Island communities by:

Section 1: Protecting Kodiak Island's port landings and on shore processing through Regionalization of historical catch landings. This should include phasing out of the off shore processing sector.

Section 2: Maintaining an independent harvester fleet while allowing for meaningful reduction of excess capacity and instituting reasonable quota share ownership caps to control excessive consolidation. Access rights should be structured to encourage that ownership of the rights remain within the community.

Section 3: Developing a Community Fishery Quota (CFQ) and Community Purchase Program (CPP) for stability and sustainability of Kodiak Island communities. Any quotas allocated to coastal fishing communities must be fished by regional residents and processed by shore based processors in the region.

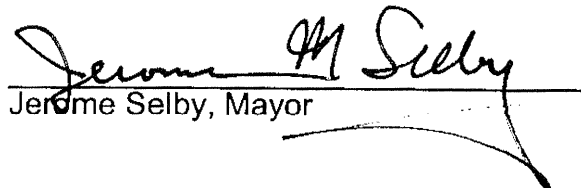
Section 4: Establishing an entry level fishery opportunities.

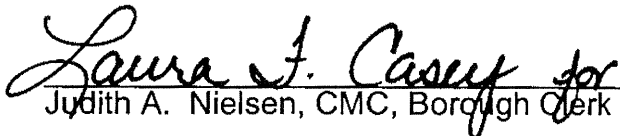
AND NOW, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED BY THAT the Governor of Alaska is requested to transmit the Kodiak Island Borough's request for the above items to be included in the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council's Gulf of Alaska Groundfish Rationalization Plan.

**ADOPTED BY THE KODIAK ISLAND BOROUGH ASSEMBLY
THIS SECOND DAY OF DECEMBER, 2004**

KODIAK ISLAND BOROUGH

ATTEST:


Jerome Selby, Mayor


Judith A. Nielsen, CMC, Borough Clerk

DISCLOSURE REQUIREMENT
 Required by House Rule XI, clause 2(g)
 and Rules of the Committee on Resources

A. This part is to be completed by all witnesses:

1. Name: *Jerome M. Selby*
2. Business Address: *1120 Barrow St. Kodiak, AK 99615*
3. Business Phone Number: *907 486 4833*
4. Organization you are representing: *Kodiak Island Borough*
5. Any training or educational certificates, diplomas or degrees or other educational experiences which add to your qualifications to testify on or knowledge of the subject matter of the hearing:
Master Public Administration
6. Any professional licenses, certifications, or affiliations held which are relevant to your qualifications to testify on or knowledge of the subject matter of the hearing:
7. Any employment, occupation, ownership in a firm or business, or work-related experiences which relate to your qualifications to testify on or knowledge of the subject matter of the hearing:
*16 years as Mayor of the Kodiak Island Borough
 numerous interactions with the NPFMC and federal fisheries legislation*
8. Any offices, elected positions, or representational capacity held in the organization on whose behalf you are testifying:
Mayor - Kodiak Island Borough

B. To be completed by nongovernmental witnesses only:

1. Any federal grants or contracts (including subgrants or subcontracts) which you have received since October 1, 2002 including the source and the amount of each grant or contract:
2. Any federal grants or contracts (including subgrants or subcontracts) which were received since October 1, 2002, by the organization(s) which you represent at this hearing, including the source and amount of each grant or contract:
3. Any other information you wish to convey which might aid the members of the Committee to better understand the context of your testimony: